

THE MIDDLE-EAST CRISIS AND THE UNITED NATIONS (UN)

EFFORT IN RESOLVING IT: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The paper examined the crisis in the Middle East. Historical antecedents formed the central focus. It discussed the concept of terrorism and linked the happenings in the Middle East to terrorism. It was discussed that religious affiliation is central while the availability of oil in the region made it necessary for nations to develop much interest in the region. At the end, it was suggested that, the United Nation (UN) should not allow itself to be bought by wealthier nations.

KEYWORDS: Terrorism, Disarmament, Political Rivalry, Conflict, Oil, Religion

INTRODUCTION

War is part and parcel of man's existence yet is fearful because of the consequences thereof. This fear made nations to develop political rivalry of each other's warring potentials. Because one faction of the warring nations is stronger, the less disadvantaged uses violence to achieve political, economic and other expedient purpose and hence the advent of the concept of terrorism. Possession of arms is seen as a means to an end and there is no universal law historically restricting it (Raino, 1979). The situation in the Middle East can best be described as a clash of civilization.

Since the second world war, the United States is found to be constantly trying to influence other nations' regimes in order to exhibit her political hegemony as well as serving her economic interest. The interest of USA in the Middle East is because of the region's richness in oil as well as protecting Israel. The present situation in the Middle East is a clear manifestation of "might is right".

The greatest threat to world security today emanates from selfishness which occupies the minds of most politicians of the world. This is because, selfishness rules the world today and creates dangers. Stronger nations are determined to suppress the weaker nations for their economic and political gains. They think and consider such weaker nations as acting against their interests. The consequent of which is, the selfish dictates will incite latent danger in that nation to cause confusion (Wolfe, 1978). Nations world over are competing among themselves in producing various arms today which owes its root to the cold war era. However, in the present situation, the issue occupies unique position in the present western agenda. The is because the west continued exerting pressure on the medium power nuclear states like Pakistan, India, Iraq, South Korea etc. to observe disarmament and non-proliferation of arms which has occupied a unique position in the world politics and the consequence of which is the current world insecurity, and the eventual advent of terrorism.

Conceptual Clarifications

In this type of discourse, certain terms are eminent and hence their clarifications so that, we can evaluate with precision whether the approach adopted in resolving the crisis could have actually done so.

Arms Race is viewed as a “linear progression of action and reaction in making and managing the defense politics of a nation or nations”. e.g. the state of affairs between the USA and former USSR described by ex-secretary of Defence, Robert McNamara (Prins, 1983:93). Steiner (1973:50) sees arms race as a repeated, competitive and reciprocal adjustments of their war-making capacities between two nations or two sets of nations. On the other hand, Bull (1961:5) defines arms race as intense competition between opposed powers or groups of powers each trying to achieve an advantage in military power by increasing the quantity or improving the quality of its armament or armed forces.

From the above, it suggests that, arms racing is an abnormal intense condition in relations between states reflecting either or both active political rivalry and mutual fears of the others military potential. The underlying principles are national security, one nation claiming superiority over the other in terms of arms, two or more actors are involved and political hegemony.

Terrorism on the other hand, means the use of violence and terror for the achievement of a political, economic or other expedient purpose against an individual or a group of individuals, a thing or group of things and a state or groups of state or threat of this. In fact, terrorism is a sort of conflict that can end definitively with the signing of papers. For instance, after the terrorist attack of September 11th 2001, the Bush Administration suggests that the fight against terrorism would become a similar central struggle around which all foreign policy could be organized. Thus dialogue and other paper works should be involved.

Interest of the West in the Middle East

The interest of the West particularly, the USA in the Middle East politics is the role of the region in her oil reach wealth in global economy. Economically, oil serves as an important resource and strategically, any nation must seek to control. Unfortunately, oil is unequally distributed among the nations of the world to the extent that some leading industrial countries have none at all, therefore, it is bound to become the object of rivalry and conflict. Indeed, the West has interest in the Middle East politics because, the region produces about two-third of the oil consumed in the world and the leading nations of the west especially America, is the largest oil consuming nation in the world. So strategically, the west should be preoccupied with eradicating all threats either external, regional or domestic within the various Middle East countries. Added to oil is the interest in protecting the baby Zionist state of Israel.

The Middle East Situation

The present situation in the Middle East cannot be laid entirely on any single party. While the west is determined at any cost to restore respect, pride and encouragement if not forcefully entrenching modern democracy, some of the leaders in the Middle East destroyed the region by attacking weaker nations, e.g. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. This singular act no doubt damaged reputations struggled hard to establish. In his view (Hazrat, 1992) when that an action is quantified in terms of monetary value will run into billions.

For sometime now, the region has been constantly in a state of uncertainty. It has been plagued by wars, discontent and hardships which have persisted. The peace of the region on many times shattered. For instance, the war between Palestine and Israel which is still on, Iraqi-Kuwait among others; thus great havoc and damage has been inflicted in the region already. Many observers believe that, whatever restlessness is prevailing in the Middle East, it is the west that is responsible because any attempt to resolve the crises, the west throws hurdle in the way.

Whatever difficulties the region is facing, the Arab nations are by themselves responsible for creating and accepting misunderstanding among them. In fact, the world is going through the most critical juncture of human history and a stage that is very sensitive and delicate. Nevertheless, there is still time to turn away from the catastrophe facing the world because the opportunity to salvage our future is still not completely lost. The demise of the USSR in the 1990s brought hope for the world peace and also served as a pointer that, state conflict will be between civilizations. This vividly captures the postulation of scholars like Huntington (1990), Dauf (1993) and Tarok (1995).

Implications of the Crisis in World Politics

Observers believe that, since America is insiting on its ambition of dominating the world, is likely to face serious challenges and by extension, the world politics is facing challenges and part of that is the crisis in the Middle East. These unfolding scenarios of events can lead to dissatisfaction, which is the root cause of terrorism. A situation described by Edward heath as:

...our present political leadership is practicing
deception upon us and that ... is extremely selfish,
brutal and foolish it will produce horrifying evil
consequences in the post-war-era.

These consequences (emphasis mine) are the advent of terrorism. Today, most countries are facing this ugly situation in various ways and the level of devastation is enormous. Thus there is an urgent need for the UN to come out and resolve the Middle East crisis.

Nevertheless, the UN has in the past attempted through its organ, the Security Council to resolve such crisis by adopting Resolution No.242 after the 1967 crises, what about now? When hundreds of people are dieing, properties destroyed and people becoming automatic refugees. The same UN uses its resources in providing security to these Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Why not get to the root of the crisis?

CONCLUSIONS

The lack of peace in the Middle East is as a result of deliberate attempt of the West to maintain its dominance in the world by creating pockets of misunderstanding between and among nations. This is endangering and preventing world peace, such as the production and spread of light weapons which today are been used by insurgents in most parts of the world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The presence of Islamic fundamentalists and the Islamic ideology coupled with the Arab world considering themselves as one, the emergence of another power bloc is eminent.
- The UN should not and must not degenerate into an organization that can easily be bought by rich nations.
- The UN should not allow a clash of civilization between Islam and Christianity which will be more devastating to world peace and or politics.

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